Increase in transportation of goods

†1323. SHRI MAHENDRA SAHNI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the transportation of goods (freight) by trains has increased by 30 per cent after 2006-07 budget;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the industries/sectors affected as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. The originating freight loading upto January in the current year was 593.67 million tonnes as against 542.81 million tonnes achieved during the corresponding period of last year *i.e.* an increase of 16% in terms of earning.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Palace on Wheels

1324. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways plans a cross-country Palace on Wheels train;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this train would traverse the heritage hubs of Buddhist and other sites in Orissa; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise. However, a fully air-conditioned train with on-board/ off-board catering and house keeping arrangements, road transport by Air

†Onginal notice of the question was received in Hindi

Conditioned vehicles, sightseeing, Darshan, visit to holy places, etc. is scheduled to run as Maha Parinirvan Special w.e.f. 28.03.2007 covering Lumbini, Sarnath, Bodhgaya, Kushinagar, Nalanda, Sravasti and also Taj Mahal & Fatehpur Sikri in Agra. Indian Railway Catering & Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has planned to run 11 trips during 2007 and other 6 trips in 2008 upto March (depending on its reception) with each trip having a duration of 8 days. The option of undertaking partial journey for a minimum duration of 3 nights is also available to the passengers.

Superfast/Rajdhani Express from Visakhapatnam to New Delhi

1325. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Visakhapatnam, an industrially developed city, needs a Superfast/Rajdhani Express from Visakhapatnam to New Delhi;

(b) whether his Ministry is seriously considering to run a Superfast Express at par Tamil Nadu Express or any other Rajdhani Express from Secunderabad *via* Visakhapatnam, Raipur, Bina, Agra and Delhi to fulfil the long pending demand of the people of Visakhapatnam; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Visakhapatnam-Delhi sector is being served by following pairs of trains:—

1. 2807/2808 Nizamuddin-Visakhapatnam Samata Express (Tri-weekly) *via* Raipur, Bina.
2. 2803/2804 Nizamuddin-Visakhapatnam Swarnajayanti Express (Bi-weekly) *via* Vijayawada, Bina.
3. 2861/2862 Nizamuddin-Visakhapatnam Dakshin Link Express (daily) *via* Vijayawada, Bina.
4. 8507/8508 Visakhapatnam-Nizamuddin Hirakud Express (Tri-weekly) *via* Bhubaneswar, Bilaspur.

These are considered adequate for the existing level of traffic offering between this sector.